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RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report responds to the mandate contained in General Assembly resolution 45/264, by which the Secretary-General was requested to submit an annual progress report on the restructuring and revitalization process. Chapter II of the report contains information on the implementation of Assembly resolution 48/162 on further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, in which the Assembly called for a comprehensive review of the implementation of the resolution, as well as of decisions on financing, at its fiftieth session. The question of a separate Executive Board for the United Nations Population Fund, the arrangements relating to the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes of the World Food Programme, and the outcome of the consultations on funding operational activities for development in the United Nations system are discussed, and an update concerning the experience of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund and of the United Nations Children's Fund is provided. Chapter III identifies a number of issues that have been raised in intergovernmental discussions on restructuring and revitalization. Annex I provides a listing of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and of the General Assembly in the economic, social and related fields. Annex II contains a checklist of relevant resolutions and decisions that have been adopted over the past 20 years on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields.

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CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1 - 3	3
II.	IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 48/162	4 - 33	3
	A. Separate Executive Board for the United Nations Population Fund	5 - 8	4
	B. Arrangements concerning the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes of the World Food Programme	9 - 13	5
	C. Status of consultations on funding operational activities for development	14 - 17	6
	D. Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund and of the United Nations Children's Fund	18 - 33	7
III.	RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION ISSUES	34 - 83	10
	A. Economic and Social Council	34 - 44	10
	1. Policy development and coordination	35	11
	2. Working methods and organization of work	36 - 44	11
	B. Subsidiary machinery in the economic, social and related fields	45 - 49	14
	C. Regional commissions	50	15
	D. Inter-agency coordination	51 - 61	15
	E. Cooperation between the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization	62 - 66	18
	F. Documentation	67 - 75	20
	G. Other issues	76 - 83	22

Annexes

I.	Subsidiary machinery in the economic, social and related fields	26
II.	Checklist of relevant resolutions and decisions	29

I. INTRODUCTION

1. General Assembly resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993 on further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields provides for a comprehensive review of the implementation of the resolution, as well as of decisions on financing, at the fiftieth session of the Assembly. In paragraphs 37 and 38 of annex I to that resolution, the Assembly called for additional efforts to be made to improve further the functioning of the United Nations in the field of operational activities, and specified that the review would include consideration of the effectiveness of the measures taken to improve the working methods of the Executive Boards, the possible need for a further modification in the size of the Boards and options for further improving the effectiveness of and representation on those Boards, taking into account the need to combine universality with efficiency and to ensure transparency in decision-making. Although the Secretary-General was not specifically asked to prepare a report in connection with this review, he has provided material intended to assist the Assembly in its deliberations. Chapter III of the present report highlights a number of themes that have been examined by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council over the years in the context of the restructuring and revitalization discussions.

2. Chapter II of the present report provides supplementary information concerning aspects of the implementation of resolution 48/162. In particular, the question of a separate Executive Board for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the arrangements relating to the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes of the World Food Programme (WFP) and the outcome of the consultations on funding operational activities for development within the United Nations system are reviewed. The latest information concerning the activities of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/UNFPA and of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), including their working methods, is also provided.

3. The present report also responds to the mandate reflected in the annex to General Assembly resolution 45/264 of 13 May 1991 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, in which the Secretary-General was requested to submit an annual progress report to the Assembly, starting with its forty-seventh session, on the implementation of the result of the restructuring and revitalization process in the economic, social and related fields, which would provide information on any recommendation agreed upon which had not been implemented as scheduled. The present report is the fourth of its kind (see A/47/534, A/48/639 and A/49/558 and Add.1).

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 48/162

4. The progress report on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session (A/49/558 and Add.1) provided information concerning the implementation of Assembly resolution 48/162. The information supplied below supplements and updates that report in

respect of specific provisions of the resolution that have been in the process of implementation, in particular the question of a separate Executive Board for UNFPA, the arrangements relating to the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes of the World Food Programme, and the outcome of the consultations on funding operational activities for development in the United Nations system. An update concerning the experience of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA and of UNICEF is also provided.

A. Separate Executive Board for the United Nations Population Fund

5. It may be recalled that in section III.3 of annex I to resolution 48/162, the General Assembly decided that the governing bodies of UNDP/UNFPA and of UNICEF should be transformed into Executive Boards of identical size and composition that would be subject to the authority of the Economic and Social Council and report directly to it. The Assembly set forth what the functions of each Executive Board should be and provided broad directives as to the nature of the regular meetings of the Boards. The need for a separate Executive Board for UNFPA was to be further considered in the light of the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development, held at Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994.

6. The International Conference on Population and Development addressed the issue of the governance of UNFPA and, in paragraph 16.27 of its Programme of Action, invited the General Assembly to consider, at its forty-ninth session, in accordance with its resolution 48/162, the establishment of a separate Executive Board for UNFPA. 1/ Over the past 25 years, the Assembly has twice taken decisions to improve the scope and quality of governance of UNFPA. 2/

7. The General Assembly, in paragraph 28 (a) of resolution 49/128 of 19 December 1994, on the report of the International Conference on Population and Development, requested the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 1995, to consider the establishment of a separate Executive Board for UNFPA. A comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 49/128 (A/50/190-E/1995/73) was made available to the Council and is before the Assembly. The question of a separate Executive Board for UNFPA is discussed in chapter III, section B, of that report.

8. The Economic and Social Council, in turn, adopted resolution 1995/55 on the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. It recommended, inter alia, that the General Assembly at its fiftieth session consider further, in the context of the comprehensive review of the implementation of its resolution 48/162, the establishment of a separate Executive Board for UNFPA, taking into account the role of the Fund in the follow-up of the implementation of the Programme of Action and bearing in mind the administrative, budgetary and programme implications of such a proposal.

B. Arrangements concerning the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes of the World Food Programme

9. In paragraph 30 of annex I to its resolution 48/162, the General Assembly decided that the same arrangements as those relating to the governing bodies of UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF should apply to the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes of the World Food Programme, and that consultations between the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) should be undertaken as soon as possible for that purpose, in view of the fact that WFP is an autonomous joint organ of both. This process should lead to the adoption of parallel resolutions by the General Assembly and the Conference of FAO.

10. At its thirty-seventh session, in May 1994, the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes of WFP considered the question of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 48/162 and decided to establish an open-ended working group, open to all Committee members, and the European Community as an observer, to consider and make recommendations on the changes to the general regulations and rules of procedure of WFP that might be necessary in order to implement resolution 48/162. The working group would also consider necessary changes in the WFP general regulations that would arise from the shift from the present project-based approach to a country-based approach, as specified in Assembly resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992.

11. The working group met on four occasions and submitted its report to the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes at its thirty-eighth session, in December 1994. In its deliberations, the working group consulted with and was advised by the secretariats of the United Nations and FAO, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 30 of resolution 48/162.

12. At its thirty-eighth session, the Committee considered the report of the open-ended working group on General Assembly resolutions 47/199 and 48/162 and approved the draft general regulations and the draft General Assembly resolution for transmission to the Economic and Social Council. At its organizational session for 1995, the Council decided to consider the question at its resumed organizational session.

13. On 6 June 1995, the Council adopted decision 1995/227 on the revision of the general regulations of the World Food Programme and reconstitution of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes as the Executive Board of the World Food Programme. By that decision, the Council recommended to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session the adoption of a draft resolution, in which the Assembly would decide the following: (a) subject to the concurrence of the Conference of FAO, that the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes should be reconstituted as the Executive Board of the World Food Programme, with 36 members elected from among the States Members of the United Nations or the States members of FAO, and that the Economic and Social Council and the Council of FAO should elect 18 members each; (b) that the members of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme should be elected on an interim basis for four years from among the States included in the lists set out in the Basic Texts of WFP, 3/ in accordance with the specific distribution of seats as set forth in

the draft resolution for the Assembly's consideration; (c) that the distribution of seats should be reviewed within two years after the establishment of the Executive Board with a view to achieving its final structure in accordance with annex I, paragraphs 25 and 30, and other relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 48/162; (d) that the review should be conducted in parallel by the Assembly and the Conference of FAO, taking into account the relevant inputs of the Economic and Social Council and the Council of FAO; (e) that the results of the review should enter into force on 1 January 2000. The Assembly would also request the Economic and Social Council, at its resumed substantive session of 1995, to elect 18 members of the Executive Board for a term beginning on 1 January 1996 according to a distribution pattern and terms of office set forth in the draft resolution. The Assembly would decide that thereafter all members of the Executive Board should be elected for a term of three years and would request the Economic and Social Council to make such provisions as ensure that the terms of office of six members elected by each of the two Councils should expire in each calendar year. The revised General Regulations of WFP would enter into force on 1 January 1996, subject to the concurrence of the Conference of FAO.

C. Status of consultations on funding operational activities for development

14. In paragraph 33 of annex I to resolution 48/162, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to review and analyse possible changes and improvements in the present funding system, including, but not limited to, multi-year negotiated pledges, and to submit a report with his recommendations. The process envisaged by the Assembly was to include consultations to be held in New York for a period of no more than five days and negotiations on prospective new modalities for financing in a resumed session of the Assembly in 1994.

15. The Assembly met in resumed session on 21 June 1994 and established a working group on funding operational activities for development. The working group met on 11 and 12 July 1994, using as a basis for its consultations the report of the Secretary-General (A/48/940). The working group, inter alia, agreed that the process of consultations should involve a number of meetings, to be scheduled within the framework of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, which should lead to concrete results as soon as possible, but not later than June 1995.

16. At its forty-eighth session, the General Assembly on the suggestion of its President, agreed to extend the consultation process relating to paragraphs 31 to 34 of annex I to resolution 48/162 of its forty-ninth session. It was also the understanding of the Assembly that the objective of such consultations would be to reach concrete results as soon as possible and no later than June 1995.

17. To facilitate the consultations and in accordance with the request contained in resolution 48/162, the Secretary-General submitted two reports on the subject (A/48/940 and A/49/834), wherein he made specific proposals that were seen by a number of delegations as a basis for further consideration of the subject. Summaries of the consultations have been circulated in documents A/49/749 of 2 December 1994 and A/49/922 of 21 June 1995. With respect to the

latest consultations, held on 26 June 1995, the General Assembly has before it a note by the Secretariat containing the Chairman's report on prospective new modalities for funding operational activities for development (A/50/271). Information on the status of consultations up to June 1995 is contained therein. The report also reflects the recommendation that the consultations be extended into the fiftieth session of the Assembly. It was also agreed that, in accordance with resolution 48/162, the process should aim at identification of a funding system and mechanisms that would generate substantial increases in resources on a predictable, continued and assured basis. In proceeding with the process, some of the relevant major issues should be considered, including the question of resource flows, the evaluation of resource requirements and issues of cost effectiveness in the operational activities.

D. Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund and of the United Nations Children's Fund

18. For the purposes of the comprehensive review mandated in General Assembly resolution 48/162, Member States may wish to bear in mind the information provided in the previous progress report of the Secretary-General on restructuring, wherein he had reported on the experience of the then "new" Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA and of UNICEF (A/49/558, paras. 23-34). In terms of the present progress report, the Secretary-General is pleased to inform delegations of the status of the Executive Boards' methods of work and related issues thus far. It is hoped that this data, together with the earlier material, as well as the information contained in paragraphs 5 to 13 above concerning the questions of a separate Executive Board for UNFPA and the reconstitution of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes of the World Food Programme as the Executive Board of the Programme, will assist Member States in their deliberations.

19. The Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA held four sessions in 1995, in New York, as follows: first regular session (10 to 13 January); second regular session (3 to 7 April); annual session (5 to 16 June); and third regular session (11 to 15 September). This comprised a total of 51 formal meetings in 24 working days. In 1995, 16 days were devoted to UNDP items, 7.5 days to UNFPA items and 2.5 days to UNDP/UNFPA common issues. The Board continued to operate in a businesslike manner. The consensus principle was maintained; a dialogue was fostered for deliberations and written statements were seldom used. When needed, difficult issues were dealt with in informal meetings scheduled between or during sessions. Observers participated in all formal sessions as well as in the informal briefings and consultations.

20. The Executive Board considered an average of 10 items per session and adopted a total of 29 decisions by consensus. Compared to the documentation submitted for the Governing Council in 1993, there was a drop of 70 per cent in the volume of core documents prepared for the Board in 1995.

21. The Bureau of the Executive Board met on a regular basis between and during sessions and assumed an increased role in organizing the work of the Board,

ensuring transparency of the decision-making process and achieving consensual results.

22. At its annual session, the Executive Board adopted decisions on the future of UNDP and on the successor programming arrangements for the next period, setting out the substantive priority areas and goals for the activities of UNDP and establishing a new programme framework to achieve these goals. The Board also endorsed the core programme areas of UNFPA and invited the Executive Director to refine the approach proposed for the allocation of UNFPA resources. The Board recommended that the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly endorse the agreement between UNDP and UNFPA to designate UNFPA resident country directors as UNFPA representatives. In this connection, by decision 1995/231, the Economic and Social Council, taking note of decision 95/20 of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA, endorsed and recommended to the Assembly for endorsement at its fiftieth session the agreement between UNDP and UNFPA relating to resident country directors.

23. During the third regular session of 1995, the Executive Board reviewed and adopted, in a five-day session, biennial budgets for UNDP, the United Nations Office for Project Services and UNFPA. Considering that the former Budget and Finance Committee of the Governing Council used to meet three weeks on the same subject, the session represented another test of the efficiency of the new Executive Board. The Board also considered subjects such as UNDP and UNFPA country programmes and related matters, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the UNFPA Global Initiative on Contraceptive Requirements, and UNDP/UNFPA field visits in 1995.

24. The Executive Board decided to divide its sessions into segments: a UNDP segment, a UNFPA segment and a new joint UNDP/UNFPA segment where common issues as well as some UNDP and UNFPA country programmes for a given country are reviewed together. The Board also decided that the UNFPA segment should normally take place at the beginning or end of regular and annual sessions, bearing in mind the need for a more coordinated approach to the discussion of country programmes. The adoption of decision 95/5 on the functioning of the Executive Board secretariat facilitated the Board's consideration of UNDP and UNFPA agenda items and led to the greater involvement of UNFPA in the performance of secretariat functions. If a separate Executive Board were to be established for UNFPA, in the light of past experience and in line with current practices of existing Executive Boards, such a Board would need an annual session of four to five days and three regular sessions of approximately three days each, bringing to 14 the annual total number of days needed for consideration of UNFPA matters. Thus, a separate Executive Board for UNFPA would require an increase of some three to four days in the use of United Nations conference servicing, with associated financial implications.

25. The Executive Board of UNICEF held four sessions in 1995 as follows: first regular session (1 to 3 and 6 February); second regular session (20 to 23 March); annual session (22 to 26 May); and third regular session (18 to 22 September). The Board continued to devote a great deal of attention to the reform of its working methods, including the implementation of several measures, in an effort to ensure that the meetings are more interactive and conducted in a more businesslike manner, that the documentation is shorter and more focused,

that the time allocated for the meetings is managed in a more rational and efficient manner and that delegations are able to participate and contribute fully and effectively in the Board deliberations.

26. In accordance with rule 50.2 and the annex to the Rules of Procedure (E/ICEF/177/Rev.6) concerning the participation of non-Board members in Board meetings, States and other participants now indicate in writing to the secretariat of the Board their special interest in specific agenda items and intervene only on those items. This information is communicated to the Executive Board at the beginning of each session. Thus, the Board is better able to organize its work and to gauge the time required for deliberations. Delegations wishing to take the floor are requested to inscribe their names on a speakers' list, wherein priority is assigned as follows: Board members; Member States of the United Nations; observer delegations; concerned United Nations bodies; UNICEF national committees; the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on UNICEF; non-governmental organizations having consultative status with UNICEF; and intergovernmental organizations and national liberation movements that have been granted observer status by the United Nations. In this way, all participants are accorded an opportunity to address the meeting within the allocated time.

27. Although the effective use of time in deliberations continues to be a major concern, a concerted effort has been made to organize the timetable of each session to allow as much consideration of an issue and resulting decision as possible, with most of the discussions and decision-making taking place at the plenary meetings. Agenda items have been considered separately or in clusters for relevance and better time management. Debate is confined to the question before the Board, which may limit the time allowed to speakers and the number of times the representative of each member may speak on any question. At the Board's annual session, an electronic signalling device was introduced to enable each speaker to monitor the time left before exceeding the allotted time-limit. This system helped with the Board's management of time and will be used at all future sessions.

28. Decision-making procedures continued to be the subject of Board concern. At its third regular session, the Board discussed a report on its working methods and procedures, including the format of future Board decisions and an addendum to the report containing a chart reflecting documents requested by the Board for its sessions from 1994 to 1997. In addition, the Board has requested the inclusion of a standing agenda item at all future sessions on the Board's working methods, with a view to assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the new Board procedures and rationalizing the workload of the Board and the secretariat alike, given the increased periodicity of meetings.

29. With respect to the consideration and approval process of country programme recommendations, the Board adopted decision 1995/8, which changes the existing country programme approval process. It was later decided, in consultation with Board members, that each year the country programme strategy note would be submitted to the first regular session, with the final country programme recommendations being submitted to the third regular session. These arrangements took effect in 1995 and will be reviewed in 1998.

30. Regarding the requirement in resolution 48/162 that funds and programmes investigate the establishment of conference facilities at their headquarters premises, the Board revisited the issue at length at its first regular session and decided to take a decision on the subject at a later date.

31. The Executive Board has adopted a number of decisions relating to its annual reports to the Economic and Social Council. At its first regular session, the Board decided on the format and content of its annual report (decision 95/5), which was subsequently prepared for and reviewed by the Board at its annual session.

32. At its third regular session, the Executive Board decided to include an item on follow-up to decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council. A report was prepared to facilitate deliberations on this item, intended to begin the process of informing the Board of the principal issues related to follow-up to the relevant resolutions of the Council's substantive session of 1995. Since many of the issues emanating from that Council session will require serious reflection by the UNICEF secretariat and/or consultation with inter-agency partners of UNICEF before the Executive Director can make definitive recommendations to the Board, it is suggested in the report that the Board revert to these issues at an early session in 1996. Moreover, it is suggested that, in the future, the Board review the decisions of the Council at its first regular session of the following year.

33. There remain some concerns about the impact of more frequent sessions on the availability of conference services, including the issuance of documents in all official languages at least six weeks prior to the start of each session, as requested by the Board. However, the Board has urged the secretariat to reduce the length of documents and has established page limits in an effort to help resolve the problem. Delegations from developing countries, especially those with small missions in New York, have continued to express concern about the adequacy and effectiveness of their participation in view of the increased number of Board sessions and the financial considerations involved in providing representation from respective capitals.

III. RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION ISSUES

A. Economic and Social Council

34. With a view to facilitating the General Assembly's consideration of the item on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, the present chapter seeks to identify a number of issues that have recently been discussed in the Economic and Social Council in the context of possible further reform measures. The following discussion includes the Economic and Social Council; subsidiary machinery in the economic, social and related fields; regional commissions; inter-agency coordination; cooperation between the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization; and the question of documentation. Additional comments are reflected in the section entitled "Other issues".

1. Policy development and coordination

35. In its 1995 agreed conclusions, the Economic and Social Council put forth recommendations intended to address, within the framework of the discussions on an agenda for development, the integrated consideration of the themes common to major international conferences with a view to promoting better coherence and providing harmonized and integrated policy guidelines. The overall responsibility the Assembly has for ensuring the implementation of conference results and facilitating and reviewing the progress achieved was referred to and, in this connection, the Council would be expected to assist in this task by making recommendations to the Assembly on policies for an effective, efficient and coordinated follow-up to major international conferences.

2. Working methods and organization of work

High-level segment

36. The questions of the selection of theme, outcome and follow-up continue to receive attention. With regard to the first question, experience to date seems to suggest that there could be two categories of themes. One category would comprise themes deriving from the role of the Council in the area of policy integration. The attention that the Council has devoted to the development of Africa, including implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa, an agenda for development and the World Summit for Social Development, including the role of the United Nations system in promoting social development, falls into this category. Another category encompasses "urgent and emerging issues", as envisaged in Council resolution 1988/77 of 29 July 1988. The Council has yet to decide on a theme for the high-level segment which falls directly under this category.

37. On the question of outcome and follow-up, the extent to which the summary of the President of the Council has an impact needs to be examined. The summary is the only outcome emanating from the high-level segment and, to date, there is no mechanism in place to determine its impact, or to follow up and monitor its long-term effects. The outcome may need to be more definitive, for example, in the form of a declaration or other negotiated conclusion that would be fully supported by the entire Council, since the impact would likely be greater and the Council would be in a better position to monitor and follow up its effect.

38. Another issue concerns the duration of the high-level segment, as well as its timing. While Assembly resolution 45/264 envisaged a four-day segment, beginning in 1993, the segment has in fact lasted for three days. The question of whether three days is adequate for a meaningful dialogue needs to be addressed. Concerning the timing of the segment, it may be preferable to have the high-level segment culminate the work of the substantive session, as is the case with the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Council could then carry out more fully its role of providing harmonized policy guidance at a high level, drawing upon its consideration of the various issues covered earlier in the session.

39. It may be recalled that the Assembly, in paragraph 13 of annex I to its resolution 48/162, in referring to the one-day policy dialogue and discussion with the heads of financial and trade institutions, envisaged that these institutions would "furnish relevant special reports and studies on the selected themes, within their respective mandates and areas of expertise, as well as on important developments in the world economy and in international economic cooperation, in accordance with the agreements signed between them and the United Nations". This provision is yet to be acted upon.

Coordination segment

40. The tasks entrusted to the coordination segment are specific and significant, defining the responsibility of the Council in terms of the coordination of the activities of the agencies, organs, organizations and bodies of the system in the economic, social and related fields. Recognizing the potential that this segment of the Council has for enhancing the coordination and cooperation of the organizations of the United Nations system, the question has arisen as to whether the "agreed conclusions" should be converted into a more authoritative legislative outcome.

41. It is encouraging that the Council decided, in its 1995 agreed conclusions, to select the theme related to the follow-up to conferences at its previous substantive session to allow for adequate preparations by the functional commissions, other relevant intergovernmental bodies and the Secretariat. However, the other theme for the coordination segment is still to be selected in the same year that the Council will consider it. The Secretary-General remains concerned about the arrangement by which the other theme for the coordination segment is selected in the same year that the Council will consider it. In his previous progress reports, the Secretary-General recalled the view that he had expressed in his report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1992 on the subject of revitalization of the Council:

> "It would be useful to maintain a multi-year programme in respect of themes for the coordination segment. General Assembly resolution 45/264 anticipates that discussions on the themes should focus attention on the activities of the United Nations system in selected economic and social areas, taking into account the report of the Secretary-General as chairman of ACC, which should contain a system-wide assessment of the status of coordination with regard to the themes and include recommendations as appropriate. The Secretary-General has been constrained in preparing the system-wide assessments on the selected coordination themes ... owing to the relatively short time between the organizational session of the Council ..., at which time the Council selected the themes, and the commencement of the substantive session of the Council .... The limited time placed at his disposal has made it difficult to engage in system-wide collection and analysis of data and consultations with the specialized agencies or in the identification of recommendations, which the Council would expect such reports to contain. As it is, the reports have not been made available six weeks or sufficiently before the opening of the Council, which is a matter for regret. The Secretary-General would therefore wish to suggest to the Council that it retain a multi-year work programme of

themes on a roll-over basis with respect to the discussions to take place in the coordination segment of the Council" (A/49/558, para. 11).

42. The General Assembly and the subsidiary bodies of the Council have begun to address requests and convey suggestions concerning the selection of themes for the coordination segment. It would be preferable if the process of consideration and selection of themes for this segment remained the exclusive responsibility of the Council. The desirability of the Council concluding its discussions on chosen coordination issues within a two-year frame and not perpetuating the consideration of such issues is another matter that requires attention, as previously pointed out by the Secretary-General (see A/49/558, para. 10).

Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation segment

43. One of the successful features of the segment is the informal "hearing" style of reviewing specific issues arising from the implementation of General Assembly resolutions on the basis of detailed substantive reports of the Secretary-General. Similarly, the experience of bringing country teams to the Council has proved its worth, allowing as it does for a genuine exchange between field representatives and delegations. It is recognized, however, that the conduct and organization of the high-level part of the segment requires further examination. It has proved difficult to select a single theme that fosters a development dialogue at the ministerial level. It is also recognized that the Council has yet to position itself to carry out its overview functions effectively, set priorities or integrate the policies and activities of the programmes and funds.

General segment

44. The general segment offers the only opportunity for the Council to carry out its responsibility of reviewing, monitoring and integrating the work of its subsidiary bodies. In this regard, attention is drawn to two provisions within General Assembly resolution 48/162 intended to improve the conduct of work of this segment of the Council. One such provision is contained in the Assembly's request, in paragraph 18 of annex I to resolution 48/162, that the Council, in its general segment, concentrate on the conclusions and the adoption of recommendations when considering the reports of its subsidiary bodies, and that it refrain from duplicating the substantive debate already held. The other is reflected in the practice of "clustering" agenda items as discussed in annex II to the same resolution. While clustering arrangements are in place and efforts have been made by the Economic and Social Council, at both its 1994 and 1995 substantive sessions, to make the general segment more action-oriented, this has not led the Council necessarily to a more effective management and review of the work of subsidiary bodies. Nor has it enabled the Council to address in depth important issues raised in reports submitted to it by the Secretary-General and other executive heads of United Nations programmes and funds and of the specialized agencies. The present arrangements, in fact, have afforded limited time to Member States to conduct a careful and integrated examination of the substantive issues on its agenda.

B. Subsidiary machinery in the economic, social and related fields

45. The question of streamlining the work and strengthening the role of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council was discussed by the Council at its 1995 substantive session in the context of its coordination segment devoted to the follow-up to United Nations conferences. In its agreed conclusions, the Council noted the present practice of assigning one functional commission or relevant intergovernmental body with primary responsibility for the follow-up and review of the implementation of each conference. Recognizing the potential for overlap as well as the benefits of sharing the responsibility for follow-up action, the Council stated that the functional commissions, within their respective mandates, should develop multi-year programmes of work for the follow-up and review of conference programmes of action. The Council, in cooperation with its functional commissions, should ensure a better division of labour among them and coordination among their multi-year programmes and should clarify the particular forms under which common themes should be considered by them. 4/ The Council also stipulated that the mandates, composition and working methods of the functional commissions should be further reviewed, as appropriate, based on the scope of work involved and adjusted accordingly, to enable them to achieve greater coherence and mutual reinforcement and to better assist the Council in a strengthened and action-oriented manner in the coordinated follow-up and review of the progress of implementation of the outcomes of United Nations conferences.

46. Within the framework of its 1995 agreed conclusions, the Council pointed to the fact that it should ensure the harmonization and coordination of the agendas and work programmes of the functional commissions by promoting a clearer division of labour among them and providing clear policy guidance to them. Periodic meetings on specific issues could be organized by the Council to allow for more dialogue with the chairpersons and the secretariats, as appropriate, of the functional commissions, other subsidiary and related bodies and the relevant executive boards. The Council further stated that, if an effective and coordinated follow-up process suggested the need, the consolidation of activities of subsidiary bodies might then be considered as appropriate. The aim of sustaining and strengthening the quality and impact of the output of those bodies would have to be assured. 5/

47. Subsidiary bodies in the economic and social fields are either responsible to the General Assembly or to the Economic and Social Council. They comprise functional commissions of the Council, regional commissions, standing bodies, ad hoc bodies, expert bodies composed of governmental experts and expert bodies composed of members serving in their personal capacity. The full list of these bodies is to be found in annex I to the present report.

48. A subsidiary body may report directly or through another body to its parent body, for example, the Trade and Development Board of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) reports to the Assembly through the Council. It may report directly to its parent body but have its work brought to the attention of another organ to which its parent body reports, for example, through the report of the Council to the Assembly the work of the Council's subsidiary machinery is placed before the Assembly. Or, it may have work that

it commissioned reported directly to another body, e.g., Special Rapporteurs appointed by the Council upon the recommendation of the Council's Commission on Human Rights are frequently mandated to report the results of their work directly to the Assembly. The practical application of this constitutional arrangement is such that there are few matters that the Council deals with that are not also brought to the attention of the Assembly, and few bodies of the Assembly in the economic and social fields whose work is not also brought to the attention of the Council. Member States may wish to consider whether this arrangement is cost-effective.

49. The Assembly conducted an initial review of subsidiary bodies in its resolution 46/235. The recent decision of the Council, reflected in its 1995 agreed conclusions, to hold itself ready to conduct a further review, as appropriate, of the mandates, composition and working methods of the functional commissions indicates that Member States may be ready to consider further, as necessary, the operations of the subsidiary machinery of the Council.

C. Regional commissions

50. In the 1995 agreed conclusions, the Economic and Social Council acknowledged that the regional commissions should play an important role in assisting countries in each region in the implementation of the recommendations of conferences. The Council and the General Assembly should take appropriate measures to ensure that the regional commissions can carry out this task effectively. The Council should enhance coordination with and among the regional commissions, including through their more effective participation in its substantive work relating to conference follow-up. 6/ In this regard, the Council felt that, in its consideration of the chosen theme related to conference follow-up, it could benefit from the active participation, through the submission of reports and dialogue, of the regional commissions, among others, and that the Council should develop a more focused dialogue with them. 7/

D. Inter-agency coordination

51. In its discussions on the follow-up to United Nations conferences, the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 1995, took note of the steps taken to enhance the effectiveness and improve the functioning of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and its subsidiary bodies. The Council stated that measures should be taken to further strengthen the role of ACC and its standing committees and ensure the systematic exchange of information and a rational division of labour between its standing committees, as well as between established ACC machinery and ad hoc mechanisms set up in the context of the follow-up to individual conferences. The Secretary-General notes that the Council invited ACC to bring system-wide coordination issues to the attention of the Council and to make recommendations thereon. The Secretary-General also notes that the wider distribution of the report of ACC and further information for Member States on its work would be highly desirable, and that the relevant intergovernmental bodies should be kept fully informed of the establishment of any inter-agency task forces for the follow-up to conferences

and of the work undertaken by them on a regular basis. 8/ Also noted is the fact that the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development and the inter-agency task force on the implementation of the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development were considered as potentially useful for the follow-up to other conferences, but should not be seen as an automatic precedent.

52. An additional element in strengthening the interface between the Council and the United Nations system will be provided by the arrangements instituted by the Council for the follow-up to major United Nations conferences, whereby the Council will carry out a review of a cross-cutting theme relating to conferences and ACC is expected to contribute actively to the review. The agreed conclusions relating to coordinated follow-up to conferences, adopted by the Council at its substantive session of 1995, were brought to the attention of ACC, and the Secretary-General, as Chairman of ACC, is actively pursuing their follow-up both at Headquarters and at the country level. The outcome of these efforts will be reported to the Council, and through it to the General Assembly, in 1996.

53. At the second regular session of 1995 of ACC, held on 12 and 13 October 1995, executive heads agreed that monitoring by the United Nations system of the follow-up to recent global conferences would continue to be a main concern of ACC in the period ahead. In order to promote an integrated follow-up to those conferences, ACC decided that, in the future, it would undertake such reviews on the basis of a thematic approach, bringing together related results of recent global conferences, and drawing for that purpose on relevant inter-agency mechanisms supporting ACC in different sectoral and cross-sectoral areas. The selection of the themes for such reviews will take into account the need to monitor progress in the implementation of conference results and to provide the Economic and Social Council, particularly its coordination segment, with consolidated information, analyses and assessment of system-wide activities in support of the Council's own thematic reviews.

54. At the country level, resident coordinators, in close cooperation with United Nations system partners, should take the lead in establishing thematic groups, reflecting the particular country situation, priorities and needs. These groups should fully involve national and local authorities and non-governmental organizations, and work with all concerned agencies and programmes, including those not having field representatives.

55. In order to provide coordinated support to the country-level follow-up, ACC agreed that such action be organized, in the first instance, around three inter-related themes: (a) the enabling environment for social and economic development; (b) employment and sustainable livelihoods; and (c) basic social services for all. ACC considered that these themes were especially relevant to a concerted attack on poverty, which constituted a main, over-arching priority objective underlying these conferences.

56. With regard to arrangements for pursuing these themes, ACC agreed that the existing task force on the implementation of the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development, under the chairmanship of the Executive Director of UNFPA, should be expanded to focus more broadly on social

services for all, and that task forces should be set up to address, respectively, the enabling environment for social and economic development, and employment and sustainable livelihoods. The World Bank agreed to serve as lead agency for the task force on the enabling environment for social and economic development and the International Labour Organization (ILO) for the task force on employment and sustainable livelihoods.

57. Concerning the scope of work of each of these task forces, it was agreed that the lead agencies would consult members of ACC on the definition of the work of, and participation in, the task forces and on the contribution that different organizations could make to their work, from their varying perspectives. It was also agreed that the relevant mechanisms should be time-bound; should be called upon to develop, at the outset of their work, a clear definition of the tasks to be accomplished; and should be discontinued when such tasks are completed. They should operate within the framework of ACC, without duplicating the work of the standing machinery but should interact closely with that machinery. The introduction of these mechanisms should not result in an increase in the total number of inter-agency meetings and in the cost of the coordination machinery.

58. The level of interaction between the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and the Economic and Social Council and the effectiveness of existing communication mechanisms was discussed by the Council at its substantive session of 1995. In the agreed conclusions on coordinated follow-up to United Nations conferences, the Council stipulated that, within the context of the follow-up to United Nations conferences, the interaction between the Council and CPC should be improved. 9/ The General Assembly should also consider a stronger link between substantive, programming, coordination and budgeting processes.

59. In his progress report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session (A/47/534), the Secretary-General commented that:

> "A number of issues have emerged affecting the full implementation of these recommendations [relating to the Joint CPC/ACC meetings]. In this regard, it may be noted that with the establishment of a coordination segment by the Council, a high-level dialogue between the executive heads of the agencies and Member States now takes place, in that context, on a regular basis ..." (para. 8).

In his report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, the Secretary-General noted that representation of ACC members was at the senior official level, that this arrangement had led to a substantive dialogue on coordination issues of mutual interest and that he considered that, should the institution of joint meetings continue to be maintained, they should be organized in the future along similar lines (A/48/639, para. 10).

60. Since then, concern has been expressed both by members of the Council and by members of CPC about the purpose and functioning of the joint meetings. The joint meetings often cover the same themes as those taken up by the Council but these meetings serve neither as preparation for the Council's consideration nor as a mechanism for coordinating the follow-up to the Council's deliberations.

The twenty-eighth series of joint meetings of CPC/ACC, held in October 1994, were devoted to the question of the development of Africa, as was the high-level segment of the Council in 1995. This year, the question of poverty eradication and the coordination of United Nations system activities in this area has been taken up by the Council, and was the topic of the twenty-ninth series of joint meetings of CPC/ACC. This question is also on the agenda of the General Assembly at its fiftieth session. There is a need to consider rationalizing the work among these bodies in order to alleviate repetitive deliberation.

61. With regard to the CPC discussion of coordination issues, it is to be noted that the Council now has a functioning coordination segment and that the focus of CPC in this area is at present largely confined to a review of the annual report of ACC as well as of the ACC biennial report on programmes and resources of the United Nations system, which shows the programme objectives of organizations of the system in the various areas of activity in which they are engaged, and the corresponding allocations of financial resources. However, these reports are also considered separately by the Economic and Social Council. The major coordination reports are considered in the coordination segment and a regular high-level dialogue with agency heads takes place there. This more direct and active role assumed by the Council in fulfilling its Charter responsibilities relating to system-wide coordination may call for an examination of the utility of the joint meetings of CPC and ACC and of the additional value provided by the consideration by CPC of coordination issues.

E. Cooperation between the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization

62. On repeated occasions, the General Assembly has called for a strengthening of the relationship between the Organization and the Bretton Woods institutions. The one-day policy dialogue during the high-level segment of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council affords a valuable opportunity in this regard. For his part, the Secretary-General has in recent months intensified consultations with the executive heads of the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization on policy issues of mutual concern. He has also addressed the Development Committee of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank, the first time a Secretary-General of the United Nations was invited to do so.

63. With regard specifically to relations with the World Trade Organization, the Secretary-General has consulted with the Director-General of the World Trade Organization on future cooperation between the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. By an exchange of letters dated 29 September 1995, the Secretary-General and the Director-General of the World Trade Organization set out a framework for cooperation between the two organizations (E/1995/125). The consultations leading to the exchange of letters brought out the importance of achieving effective cooperation between the United Nations and the World Trade Organization, consistent with the respective status and mandates of the two organizations and the contractual nature of the World Trade Organization. The flexible framework for cooperation is liable to further review and adaptation in the light of developments and emerging requirements. It was further agreed to recommend to the responsible intergovernmental organs that present arrangements

governing the status of the International Trade Centre as a joint body be confirmed and renewed with the World Trade Organization, subject to revised budgetary arrangements as called for by the General Council of the World Trade Organization.

64. The General Assembly envisaged a one-day policy dialogue and discussion, within the high-level segment, on important developments in the world economy and international economic cooperation. The heads of multilateral financial and trade institutions of the United Nations system would be invited to participate actively in this dialogue and discussion on matters of mutual interest with a view to building areas of understanding. 10/ As of the Council's substantive session of 1992, the heads of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and UNCTAD have been invited to take part in this unique event. With the establishment of the World Trade Organization, that organization received an invitation to participate in 1995. It is worth while noting that, at the 1995 substantive session, all four of these organizations were represented at the level of executive head, two of whom having been recently appointed - the President of the World Bank and the Director-General of the World Trade Organization. A candid and important exchange of views took place on this occasion. As was stated in the summary of the President of the Council referring to the dialogue:

> "All the executive heads [taking part] reiterated their commitment to cooperating and working closely together with the United Nations in pursuit of the common goal of eradication and alleviation of poverty and in the promotion of sustainable development and social justice. Such cooperation should be based on the principles of comparative advantage and should respect the governance structure, mandate and competence of each organization and the policy guidance received from their respective governing boards". 11/

65. The President's summary also refers to a strengthened Council that "should facilitate and catalyse such cooperation and coordination in fulfilment of its responsibilities under the Charter". The framework for such cooperation has been strengthened by the goals and objectives agreed upon by the international community at the highest political level in major global conferences. In mentioning a coordinated approach to the follow-up to global conferences at the country level, the President's summary states that, in the context of the work on the policy framework papers and the country strategy notes, "specific modalities for achieving greater complementarity between the Bretton Woods institutions and the other organizations of the United Nations system could be pursued".

66. In relation to the follow-up to United Nations conferences, the Economic and Social Council, in its 1995 agreed conclusions, pronounced itself on the issue of cooperation between the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization. Specifically, the Council emphasized "the need to further enhance the interaction and cooperation between the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization at all levels, inter alia, to ensure effective follow-up to major international conferences". The Council also noted that "the question of cooperation between

the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions will also be addressed within the framework of the discussions on an agenda for development". 12/

F. Documentation

67. In paragraph 36 of annex I to resolution 48/162, the Assembly underscored the need further to examine ways and means to enhance the modalities of reporting in the economic, social and related fields, and requested the Secretary-General to make recommendations on the advantages of establishing a system of integrated reports in the economic, social and related fields. Pursuant to that request, the Secretary-General submitted to the Economic and Social Council a report on modalities of reporting in the economic, social and related fields (E/1994/88). The "documentation crisis" was depicted in that report and new and concrete measures were proposed to alleviate it. The Council, in decision 1994/304 of 29 July 1994, decided not to take any action on the draft resolution on the subject (E/1994/L.41), and to transmit the draft resolution, together with the report of the Secretary-General, to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session for further consideration by the Second Committee.

68. A draft resolution entitled "Modalities of reporting in the economic, social and related fields" (A/C.2/49/L.14), reflecting the very specific recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report, was introduced in the Second Committee on 23 November 1994. The Second Committee decided to ask its Chairman to transmit the draft resolution to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee so that it could be considered in the context of the question of rationalization of documentation. To date, no action has been taken on the matter.

69. At its resumed organizational session for 1995, the Economic and Social Council adopted decision 1995/222 of 5 May 1995 on documentation, by which the Council decided that the format of the provisional programme of work of the Council should be changed so that there would be a provisional programme of work for the organizational sessions and the substantive sessions, that a report on the status of documentation should be available to delegations three weeks before the resumed organizational session of the Council, and that, should a report for any session of the Council be issued shortly before or on the same day that an item or segment was to be considered, the officer responsible for the introduction of the report should be accountable to the Council, that is to say, said officer should give the reasons for the delay. On the basis of that decision, a new format for the provisional programme of work for the 1995 substantive session of the Council was introduced. This document proved to be a useful reference tool for delegations and a similar model has been utilized with respect to the programmes of work of the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly at the current session of the Assembly.

70. In the 1995 agreed conclusions of the Council, the Secretary-General was requested to present proposals, for consideration by the Council in 1996 and by the Assembly at its fifty-first session, on the simplification of existing reporting requirements, taking into account the reports that would be required for the follow-up of United Nations conferences. The Council also stressed that

other methods for the promotion of integrated reporting by the Secretariat should be explored and that the Secretary-General should use information and data already provided by Governments to the maximum extent possible, avoiding duplication in requests for such information. In stressing that the voluntary submission of national information represents a valuable contribution for the follow-up and review of the implementation of the recommendations of relevant conferences, the Council also requested the Secretary-General to prepare a standardized and simplified format, which could be used by Governments in preparing information on a single subject or on clusters of subjects. 13/

71. The documentation crisis in the United Nations is not a new phenomenon. None the less, despite repeated analyses and discussions, the crisis continues and, indeed, may have grown more acute. It seriously impacts the ability of intergovernmental bodies to perform their mandated functions and the impact is felt most severely in the economic, social and related sectors, where the demand for documentation is very high.

72. Although Member States have complained insistently about the documentation situation, it is not sufficiently appreciated that the Secretariat is as much concerned and as equally interested in identifying the causes of the problem and finding ways and means to resolve it as are Member States. It should be recognized in this regard that the Secretariat can have no interest in bringing out a document long after the required date. It is self-defeating for the Secretariat to expend considerable effort in time and energy to produce a report to which reasonable consideration is not given.

73. The roots of the documentation crisis are systemic. Documents are prepared at the request of intergovernmental and other bodies which meet at stipulated times. As the number of bodies increase, so will the demand for more documentation. As bodies meet more frequently, so too will documentation requests accelerate. More efficient employment of technological innovations and more effective planning of work schedules on the part of the Secretariat can contribute to easing the effects of excessive documentation to some degree. Without a cultural change in the way business is done in the economic, social and related sectors, where the tendency has been to increase the number of bodies as well as the frequency with which they meet, it is unlikely that the documentation crisis will abate.

74. The Secretary-General would like to reaffirm the recommendations put forth in his previous report on the question (E/1994/88, para. 20). In particular, he would like to re-emphasize the following measures in regard to control and limitation of documentation:

(a) Establishing a 16-page limit for reports prepared by the Secretariat for the Economic and Social Council or one of its subsidiary bodies. The production of addenda to such reports would be strictly limited to that which is included in the legislative mandate. The 24-page limit would continue to apply to consolidated reports that cover more than a single legislative mandate (see para. (e) below);

(b) Limiting the reports of the functional commissions and the subsidiary bodies of the Council to (i) a brief discussion on organizational and procedural

matters and (ii) recommendations, including resolutions and decisions adopted. The current practice of including an extensive summary of the discussion during the session should be discontinued;

(c) Requesting the Secretariat, at the time of the adoption of a legislative mandate requesting documentation, to indicate whether the documentation could be prepared within existing staff and financial resources and, if not, to give the costs involved;

(d) Mandating the presentation of oral rather than written reports, particularly in regard to progress reports and reports that are presented on an annual basis;

(e) Encouraging the submission of a single "consolidated" report on related topics under a single item or sub-item of the agendas;

(f) Requesting the Secretariat to compile for the Council and for each of its subsidiary bodies a list of documents mandated in resolutions and decisions to be adopted at a given session in order to give members a clear picture of all documentation requested and to include in the report on the status of documentation for a given session a list of all reports already mandated for the coming year;

(g) Making increased efforts at biennialization or triennialization of agenda items or sub-items. The Council and its subsidiary bodies should consider if, in fact, the majority of agenda items need to be examined on an annual basis.

75. Subject to the General Assembly's action on the recommendations in the present report, and pending further developments in intergovernmental reform, the Secretary-General intends to take appropriate action for the streamlining of documentation. In particular, following each session of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council, the Secretary-General will carefully review all requests for documentation emanating from these bodies and respond to them by submitting consolidated reports addressing various requests on related topics.

G. Other issues

76. Taking account of the experience gained since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 48/162, it is suggested for consideration that the Council maintain a single substantive session each year, but that the session be split into two segments. One of these segments would be a broadened high-level segment, incorporating the existing high-level, coordination and operational activities segments. Separately, a distinct general segment would be held. This segment should allow for adequate time for the examination of reports of subsidiary bodies and discussion of items. This separate segment would enable the Council to focus on its overall guidance, monitoring and management role, and should contribute to alleviating the difficulties that have been encountered with clustering items in the current general segment. A separate high-level segment that is not linked to the general segment would serve to enhance the

authority of the Council and enable it to take decisions in specific sectors at a high political level. Thus, the Council would hold an organizational session early in the year, a resumed organizational session, and a substantive session, divided into two focused segments.

77. The Secretary-General would like to reiterate a point he made in his previous progress report (A/49/558, para. 20) regarding the Council's relationship with the Security Council. In that report, he recalled that the concluding remarks made by the President of the Economic and Social Council on 29 July 1994 and, in particular, the reference made to the Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, of 1993, in which it was mentioned that the "Council should be invited to provide to the Security Council reports on situations in the economic and social areas which, in its opinion, constitute threats to international peace and security" and it was suggested that "the Council introduce a flexible high-level inter-sessional mechanism to respond in a timely way to new developments". 14/ In relating this proposal to the tragic events that took place in Rwanda, the President emphasized the need to investigate the establishment of a continuing mechanism and proposed holding informal consultations on the subject. Action in this respect would go hand-in-hand with Article 65 of the Charter of the United Nations, which states that "the Economic and Social Council may furnish information to the Security Council and shall assist the Security Council upon its request", and would assist the Secretary-General in his ongoing efforts to ensure that activities of the Organization in the economic and social sectors and those in the political and humanitarian assistance spheres are pursued in a coherent and mutually reinforcing way.

78. The Secretary-General would also like to recall a suggestion he had made in his report on the work of the Organization in 1992, namely that, the Economic and Social Council might introduce a flexible high-level inter-sessional mechanism in order to facilitate a timely response to evolving socio-economic realities. Through such a mechanism, the Council would, in a continuing dialogue with the organizations of the system, build and expand agreement on common ends and objectives and adapt the economic and social policy agendas to changing requirements. In the framework of an integrated approach to the objectives of the United Nations, such a mechanism would enable the Council to play a central monitoring and surveillance role within the United Nations. The Secretary-General had also stated in his report that he would urge Member States represented in the high-level inter-sessional mechanism to send experts and representatives of stature, who would have access to top decision makers and could speak for their Governments on issues of global concern. 15/

79. At present, the Bureau of the Council has specific responsibilities in terms of the draft programme of work and provisional agenda of the Council and the allocation of agenda items, in consultation with members of the Council. It is also expected to monitor constantly, with the assistance of the Secretariat, the status of preparation of documentation. The Bureau should be invited to play an even more decisive role year-round. The Bureau could be expected to assist the Council in carrying out its supervisory and coordinating responsibilities vis-à-vis its subsidiary bodies. The Bureau could play a useful role on behalf of the Council and assist the Council in exercising its coordinating role in the economic, social and related fields uninterruptedly.

80. As previously proposed by the Secretary-General in 1990 (see E/1990/75, para. 9), the Council may wish to consider inviting eminent scholars or knowledgeable persons outside the United Nations system, as well as persons within the system, to participate in its discussions on a regular basis. Note is taken of the fact that, during the 1995 high-level segment, a number of panel discussions and briefings were arranged, as mentioned in the summary of the President of the Council, and that they generated "valuable ideas and allowed a better appreciation of the role of different actors in the development process". 16/

81. Both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council view the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields as a "continuing" process. The Secretary-General supports this approach, which should be aimed at enhancing the flexibility and adaptability of the United Nations in the performance of its functions and its ability to address the most urgent tasks and new demands, as well as to ensure an efficient and effective United Nations system capable of dealing with the growing number of global challenges in the economic, social and related fields. Indeed, since entering office, the Secretary-General has made continuing efforts to simplify and enhance the coordination of the activities of the Organization. As he reminded delegations at the opening session of the 1995 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, the Organization's structures had been rationalized, "thereby making our work more coherent, flexible, creative and productive". He added that there was need to go further and that the Organization had to increase its efficiency while continuing to eliminate duplication and overlapping. In this connection, the Secretary-General stressed that the United Nations should focus particularly on those sectors in which the Organization's contribution is irreplaceable.

82. The Secretary-General greatly appreciated the will shown by the seven major industrialized countries at the Halifax Summit to "develop a more effective internal policy coordination role for the Economic and Social Council" (A/50/254-S/1995/501, annex, para. 36). The Secretary-General similarly appreciated that the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, in their recent Ministerial Declaration stressed that "ECOSOC's role, as reflected in the Charter and recent General Assembly resolutions, must be fully exercised" (A/50/518, annex, para. 45). He is also fully aware of the discussions of the ad hoc open-ended working group of the General Assembly on an agenda for development which have included the issue of institutional reform. According to the outline agreed upon by the working group, institutional issues are to be covered in the third chapter of the agenda, together with follow-up aspects. It is expected that, under this chapter, the agenda should refer, inter alia, to enhancing the role, capacity, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations system in development, and to the interaction between the United Nations and other multilateral development institutions, including the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization.

83. The relevant portions of the agenda for development and the outcome of the Assembly's consideration of the restructuring and reform of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields should contribute to further defining, rationalizing and strengthening the future work of the Organization in the economic and social sectors.

Notes

1/ Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution I, annex.

2/ General Assembly resolutions 3019 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972 and 34/104 of 14 December 1979.

3/ Reproduced in E/1995/L.11, annex II.

4/ A/50/3, chap. III, sect. A, agreed conclusions 1995/1, sixteenth paragraph.

5/ Ibid., thirteenth paragraph.

6/ Ibid., fourteenth paragraph.

7/ Ibid., eighth paragraph.

8/ Ibid., eighteenth paragraph.

9/ Ibid., fifteenth paragraph.

10/ General Assembly resolution 45/264, annex, para. 5 (d) (i).

11/ See A/50/3, chap. II.

12/ Ibid., chap. III, sect. A, agreed conclusions 1995/1, twenty-third paragraph.

13/ Ibid., twentieth paragraph.

14/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/48/1), para. 42.

15/ Ibid., Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No.1 (A/47/1), para. 83.

16/ A/50/3, chap. III, sect. A, agreed conclusions 1995/1, sixty-fifth paragraph.

ANNEX I

Subsidiary machinery in the economic, social and related fields

I. Subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council

A. Functional commissions

1. Statistical Commission

2. Commission on Population and Development

3. Commission for Social Development

4. Commission on Human Rights

Principal subsidiary organ: Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

5. Commission on the Status of Women

6. Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Subsidiary organs:

(a) Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East

(b) Meetings of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies

7. Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

8. Commission on Science and Technology for Development

9. Commission on Sustainable Development

Subsidiary bodies:

(a) Ad Hoc Inter-Sessional Working Group on Finance

(b) Ad Hoc Inter-Sessional Working Group on Sectoral Issues

(c) Open-ended Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests

B. Regional commissions

1. Economic Commission for Africa

2. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

3. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

4. Economic Commission for Europe

5. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

C. Standing committees

1. Committee for Programme and Coordination

2. Commission on Human Settlements

3. Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

D. Expert bodies composed of governmental experts

1. Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

2. United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

E. Expert bodies composed of members serving in their personal capacities

1. Meeting of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance

2. Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters

3. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

4. Committee on Natural Resources

5. Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development

II. Subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly in the economic, social and related fields

A. Standing bodies

1. High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries

2. United Nations Children's Fund

3. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

4. United Nations Development Fund for Women

5. United Nations Development Programme

6. United Nations Environment Programme

7. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

8. United Nations Population Fund

9. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

10. World Food Council

11. World Food Programme

B. Ad hoc bodies

1. Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Elaboration of an International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

2. Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

ANNEX II

Checklist of relevant resolutions and decisions

General Assembly resolution/decision number	Title	Date of adoption
32/197	Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system	20 December 1977
33/202	Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system	29 January 1979
34/212	Implementation of section I of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system	19 December 1979
34/213	Implementation of section V of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system	19 December 1979
34/214	Implementation of section VII of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system	19 December 1979
35/203	Implementation of section VIII of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system	16 December 1980
36/187	Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system	17 December 1981
37/442	Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system	20 December 1982

General Assembly resolution/decision number	Title	Date of adoption
39/436	Implementation of section II of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system	18 December 1984
39/437	Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system	18 December 1984
41/213	Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations	19 December 1986
42/170	Implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/213 in the economic and social fields	11 December 1987
42/211	Implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/213	21 December 1987
43/174	Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations in the economic and social fields	9 December 1988
43/213	Implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/213: progress report and revised estimates for the biennium 1988-1989	21 December 1988
43/432	Revitalization of the Economic and Social Council	20 December 1988
44/103	Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields	11 December 1989
45/175	Rationalization of the work of the Third Committee	18 December 1990
45/177	Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields	19 December 1990

General Assembly resolution/decision number	Title	Date of adoption
45/264	Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields	13 May 1991
46/235	Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields	13 April 1992
48/162	Further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields	20 December 1993

ECOSOC resolution/decision number	Title	Date of adoption
1987/112	In-depth study of the United Nations intergovernmental structure and functions in the economic and social fields	6 February 1987
1988/77	Revitalization of the Economic and Social Council	29 July 1988
1989/114	Further measures for the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/77 on the revitalization of the Council	28 July 1989
Agreed conclusions*	Agreed conclusions on coordinated follow-up by the United Nations system and implementation of the results of the major international conferences organized by the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields	28 July 1995

* The text of the agreed conclusions can be found in the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/50/3).